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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/368,996

08/05/1999

TIMOTHY P. BARBER

2-604.2-1

6192

4955

7590

10/03/2008

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EXAMINER

HAVAN, THU THAO

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3693

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

10/03/2008

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

# Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

09/368,996

**Applicant(s)**

BARBER, TIMOTHY P.

**Examiner**

THU-THAO HAVAN

**Art Unit**

3693

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 June 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 and 5-13 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 2, 3 and 5-13 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SF/IC)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Detailed Action**

***Response to Amendment***

Claims 1-3 and 5-13 are pending. This action is in response to the remarks received June 9, 2008.

***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-3 and 5-13 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101***

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

The basis of this rejection is set forth below:

whether the invention produces a useful, concrete, and tangible result.

For a claimed invention to be statutory, the claimed invention must produces a useful, concrete, and tangible result. Mere ideas in the abstract (i.e. abstract idea, law of nature, natural phenomena) that do not apply, invoice, or use fail to promote the "progress of science and the useful arts" (i.e., the physical sciences as opposed to social sciences, for example) and therefore are found to be non-statutory subject matter. For a process claim to pass muster, the recited process must somehow apply, involve, or use to produce a useful, concrete, and tangible result. A mere intended or

nominal use of a component does not confer statutory subject matter to an otherwise abstract idea if the component does not apply, involve, use, or advance the underlying process. Furthermore, the preamble is generally not accorded any patentable weight where it merely recites the purpose of a process or the intended use of a structure, and where the body of the claim does not depend on the preamble for completeness but, instead, the process steps or structural limitations are able to stand alone. *See In re Hirao*, 535 F.2d 67, 190 USPQ 15 (CCPA 1976) and *Kropa v. Robie*, 187 F.2d 150, 152, 88 USPQ 478, 481 (CCPA 1951). In the instant case, the preamble of claim 1 recites "A system". However, the claim as a whole recites the steps of intended use of a structure (i.e., system). Thus, the preamble fails to give "life, meaning, vitality" to the claim as a whole. *See MPEP 2111.02*. Because the preamble is not accorded any patentable weight as stated above, claim 1 as a whole merely recites steps in the abstract for use in facilitating a purchase of a financed product without producing any useful, concrete, and tangible result. For example, the steps of "when a consumer visits..." and "having the third party...", which comprise the claim as a whole are mere steps in the abstract without setting forth a practical application for producing any useful, concrete, and tangible result. (*See Interim Guidelines, IV (C)(1, 2)*).

#### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims **2-3** and **5-13** are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The prior arts of record fail to teach, singly or in combination, having the third party return to the

consumer a pricetag page that includes a price-per-unit time for access to the information made available for access by the vendor, a maximum duration of access for which the consumer is authorized, and a link to the start session address, which is an address of the third party.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

### **Conclusion**

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thu Thao Havan whose telephone number is (571) 272-8111. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 6am-2pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Kramer can be reached on (571) 272-6783. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct-uspto.gov/>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at (866) 217-9197 (toll-free).

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/Thu Thao Havan/

Art Unit 3693

9/24/08

**Application Number****Application/Control No.**

09/368,996

**Applicant(s)/Patent under  
Reexamination**

BARBER, TIMOTHY P.

**Examiner**

THU-THAO HAVAN

**Art Unit**

3693